



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 7, 2012

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MEDIA ADVISORY

KEMP'S RIDLEY SEA TURTLE STRANDED IN HOLLAND TO BE RELEASED BACK INTO THE GULF OF MEXICO ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9 AT 11 A.M. (CST)

WHAT:

A juvenile female endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtle, found stranded in Holland, is scheduled to be released by the teams of SEA LIFE Aquarium Grapevine, SEA LIFE Aquarium Scheveningen Animal Rescue Keep (ARK), National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service personnel back into the Gulf of Mexico on **Friday, November 9 at 11 a.m. (CST)**. The turtle, named Flip by her rescuers, will be released in front of the Malaquite Beach Pavilion at the Padre Island National Seashore. The release is open to the public with free entry to the park for spectators and media.

Flip will be outfitted with a satellite transmitter that will record data and show her post-release movements in the Gulf of Mexico. To track her travels visit www.seaturtle.org then click on "Track a Sea Turtle" and enter Flip into the box on the left marked "Animal Finder".

WHEN:

Friday, November 9 at 11 a.m. (CST)

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WHERE:

The release will be held at Padre Island National Seashore in front of the Malaquite Beach Pavilion, about two miles past the park entrance on Park Road 22. Park entrance fees are waived for people attending Flip's release.

WHY:

Flip was found injured and cold stunned, stranded on the shores of Holland, near the city of The Hague, on December 10, 2011. She was taken to SEA LIFE Aquarium Scheveningen to begin a long rehabilitation process. After her first month at SEA LIFE and much TLC by the staff, Flip started feeding again, and since January of 2012, has steadily grown, gaining weight and strength. Since that time, several international partners have worked together to bring the endangered sea turtle back home to the Gulf of Mexico.

Flip flew non-stop from Amsterdam to Houston on KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and arrived on Thursday, November 1. She was then transported by the SEA LIFE Aquarium Grapevine team to the Port Aransas Animal Rehabilitation Keep (ARK), where a health assessment was conducted and Flip was deemed in excellent health for release into the Gulf of Mexico. For more information on Flip's story visit the SEA LIFE Scheveningen website at <http://www.visitsealife.com/Scheveningen/en/>.

The success of this effort is a result of international cooperation with SEA LIFE Scheveningen and SEA LIFE Grapevine, Texas. SEA LIFE provides a strong commitment to marine life education, conservation and rehabilitation, and is part of MERLIN ENTERTAINMENTS, a worldwide network of entertainment and educational attractions and the world's biggest global aquarium operator. Also participating are KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, the University of Texas Marine Science Institute, Animal Rehabilitation Keep, the U.S. National Park Service, the government of Holland, NOAA Fisheries, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

About the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfws, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwshq, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq>. <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/>

About SEA LIFE Grapevine:

SEA LIFE Aquarium Grapevine transports you into the amazing underwater world. Prepare for astonishingly close views of everything from humble starfish and seahorses to graceful rays and powerful sharks. With an amazing 360° ocean tunnel, 30 display tanks and more than 5,000 sea creatures the aquarium is the perfect stop for family fun! To get any closer you would have to get wet! Admission is \$19 for adults, \$15 for children ages 3 to 12. For more information visit www.sealifeus.com/grapevine. Follow us at www.facebook.com/sealifegrapevine and www.twitter.com/sealifegrpevine.

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